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NSC BRIEFING 18 March 1954

LATEST REPORTS ON FIGHTING AT DIEN BIEN PHU

I. Viet Minh heavily shelling Dien Bien Phu now after lull yesterday.

A. Apparently prelude to more frontal assaults.

B. In first series of attacks on 13-15 March, two French strong-points "Beatrice" and "Gabrielle" were overrun.

C. French losses believed to total two battalions, Viet Minh five.

II. Position's "Isabelle" and "Anne Marie" believed taking brunt of enemy's renewed activity.

A. Clearing weather aiding French aircraft.

B. B-26's and fighters peppering enemy concentrations, trying to knock out artillery positions.

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